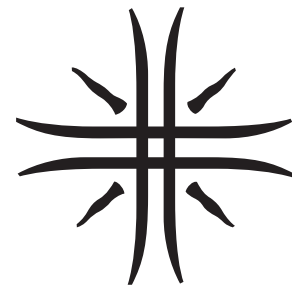


Wooden Madness

Encouraging developments emerged in the 70s and 80s. A renewed interest in the classic wooden designs of the 20s lead to the construction of the *Texas Cyclone* at the now-defunct Six Flags Astroworld, the *Grizzly* at Kings Dominion in Virginia, and LaRonde's *Le Monstre* in Montreal, among others. Classic coaster design continues its reemergence in the contemporary, computer-assisted era including 20s looking clones like *Roar* at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom.



The Golden Age

Throughout the 1920s, pioneering designers such as John A. Miller, Harry Traver, Herb Schmeck, and the partnership of Prior and Church developed the ultimate gravity ride attractions. Wild thrill machines like Canada's infamous Crystal Beach Cyclone, New York's Coney Island Cyclone, New York's Rye Beach Aeroplane, and the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk Giant Dipper were erected. In the following decade, innovations such as Norman Bartlett's Flying Turns appeared. Ultimately, nearly 2,000 coasters were built. Hardly any of them remain today.

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AMERICAS RECORD BREAKING ROLLER COASTERS

Issue 1 Spring '08

A Brief History Of Roller Coasters

The roller coaster traces its origins to Russia, where wood-framed ice slides sent sledders down 70 foot high slopes as early as the 16th century. These Russian Mountains also became popular summertime attractions when wheeled carts rolled riders down large, undulating wooden ramps. What is considered the first successful commercial roller coaster made its debut in 1884 at New York's famous Coney Island. LaMarcus A. Thompson constructed the first roller coaster, the primitive Gravity Switchback Railway. The ride was an instant success, drawing long lines of eager riders and yielding returns at an astounding \$600 a day. The idea of the gravity ride spread quickly, leading to great diversity in early roller coaster design. Rides similar to Thompson's, as well as new variations were constructed worldwide.

"The ride was an instant success, drawing long lines of eager riders and yielding returns at an astounding \$600 a day"

As reported by Jeffrey Stanton in the Fall 2007 issue of Roller Coaster! Magazine, there were several early roller coaster patents for early roller coasters, both switchback and circular, granted by the U.S. Patent Office between the years of 1872 and 1886. The following early roller coaster patents were issued: Refer to Victor Canfield's amusement park web site for information about other patents for roller coasters.

(Continued on back page)

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Accelerator Coaster

Kingda Ka

The Record Breaking Machine

Six Flags Great Adventure will launch the tallest and fastest roller coaster on earth, the keystone of a new, mythical jungle kingdom, which will also feature an elaborate children's area and massive tiger exhibit for the 2005 season.

"The announcement today represents the largest expansion in the 30 year history of Six Flags Great Adventure," Kieran Burke, Six Flags, Inc. CEO, explained. "Six Flags Great Adventure is already the world's largest regional theme park, and this record-breaking new capital marks the first step in transforming this park into a true family destination."

The new roller coaster will shatter all existing world records for speed and height by legendary proportions. Truly the "King of Coasters," Kingda Ka will rocket riders horizontally from 0 to 128 mph in 3.5 seconds before vertically catapulting them a mind-blowing 456 feet (45 stories) into the sky at a 90 degree angle. After a brief moment in the clouds, riders descend 418 feet (41 stories) back down to earth in a 270 degree spiral, only to experience another breathtaking moment of weightlessness as they soar over a 129 foot tall hill (nearly 13 stories) and then glide back into the station.

"The addition of Kingda Ka, the tallest and fastest roller coaster on earth, brings our already spectacular coaster arsenal up to 14," said Six Flags Great Adventure's vice president and general manager, Rick McCurley. "There is no doubt that this will be the top stop for thrill seekers

worldwide."

Kingda Ka will be the cornerstone of a new 11 acre, mythical jungle domain called The Golden Kingdom. The Golden Kingdom will also feature Balin's Jungle Land, an elaborate, new children's area; Temple of the Tiger, a massive, new educational tiger exhibit; plus three new shops and four new eateries.



Steel Coaster

Superman Ride of Steel

The Heroic Hyper Coaster That Lives Up To Its Lofty Reputation

I don't give out a lot of 10's. But this ladies and gentlemen, deserves a 10. It's reputation was huge and I figured it would be better than the other coasters by the same name, I just didn't know it was going to be THAT good. Thanks to the unimaginative minds at Six Flags it can be a bit confusing. There are two other hypercoasters by the same name, one at Six Flags America and one at the de-flagged, Derian Lake, which is now just Ride of Steel. Those two are identical and very pedestrian in comparison to the New England installation. It's nothing short of a masterpiece. Don't take my word for it. Thousands of coaster enthusiasts agree. See the Golden Ticket Award and Mitch Hawkers Poll.

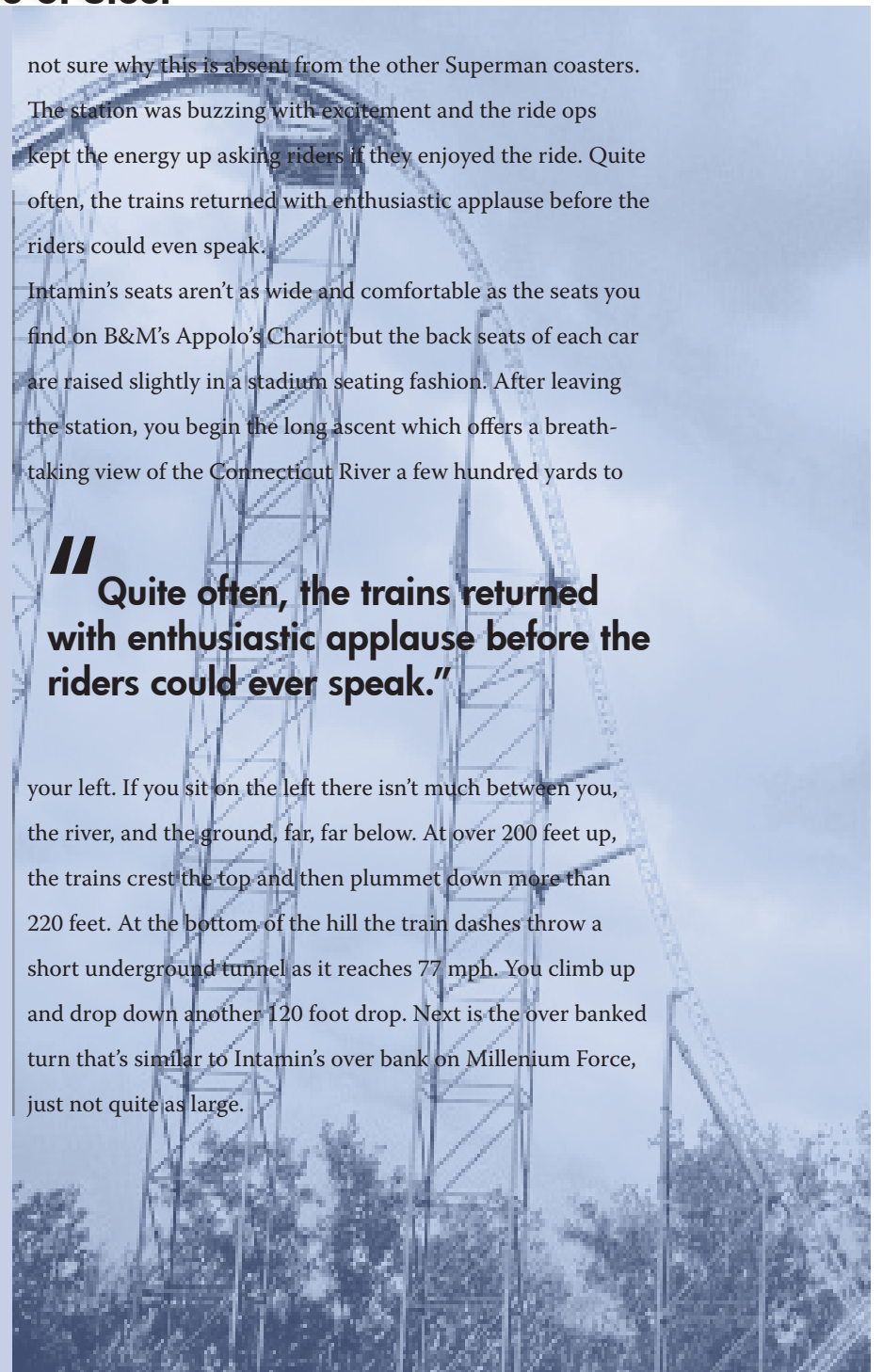
Now, to the review. The experience starts with some appropriate Metropolis-themed supporting buildings. Right away, I noticed a clean, well organized queue with the Superman movie theme playing in the background. It's a small touch, but adds to the experience. I'm

not sure why this is absent from the other Superman coasters. The station was buzzing with excitement and the ride ops kept the energy up asking riders if they enjoyed the ride. Quite often, the trains returned with enthusiastic applause before the riders could even speak.

Intamin's seats aren't as wide and comfortable as the seats you find on B&M's Appolo's Chariot but the back seats of each car are raised slightly in a stadium seating fashion. After leaving the station, you begin the long ascent which offers a breathtaking view of the Connecticut River a few hundred yards to

“ Quite often, the trains returned with enthusiastic applause before the riders could ever speak.”

your left. If you sit on the left there isn't much between you, the river, and the ground, far, far below. At over 200 feet up, the trains crest the top and then plummet down more than 220 feet. At the bottom of the hill the train dashes through a short underground tunnel as it reaches 77 mph. You climb up and drop down another 120 foot drop. Next is the over banked turn that's similar to Intamin's over bank on Millennium Force, just not quite as large.



4th Dimension Coaster

X2

The world's first 4th Dimension roller coaster is everything it promised to be

How's this for a familiar tale? Big amusement park an ounces precedent-setting, technology-busting thrill ride. Heralds an opening date. Opening date comes and goes with no opening. Ride eventually opens, then closes. The thrill-seeking community collectively weeps.

These are the times we live in, friends. Parks have learned there's only one way to do business: innovate and take risks or watch the crowds go somewhere else. And every major park chain, from Disney on down, knows what it's like to swing for the bleachers and whiff it once or twice.

Six Flags Magic Mountain swung mighty hard when they hired Arrow Dynamics to produce X, the world's first 4th Dimension roller coaster: a hypercoaster with an essentially vertical drop, twenty-foot wide trains with seats extending off either side of an innovate four-rail track system, traveling at up to 76 miles per hour, and—oh, yeah—passenger vehicles that rotate forward and backward... should we really have been surprised by what happened? Late 2001, X finally accepted paying customers only to operate sporadically, and then shut down for a spell over the summer of 2002. More than once, I hoped to ride and was denied.

But after some rethinking and retooling of the coaster's off-the-charts freaky vehicles, X did reopen. And this past December, I finally got a taste.

Ay, chihuahua...



Flying Coaster

Tatsu

Look... it's an Airplane!

The world's tallest, fastest and longest flying coaster, Tatsu is the perfect compliment to Six Flags Magic Mountain's world-class roller coaster collection. Suspended beneath the track, in a "horizontal to Earth" flying position, riders on Tatsu launch from high atop Six Flags Magic Mountain's Samurai Summit and traverse a 263 foot elevation change spanning four separate areas of the theme parks at speeds in excess of 62 miles per hour. Tatsu's 3,602 feet of blazing red, orange and yellow twisted steel track is barely visible, being intertwined through Magic Mountain's mountainside. While riding the Tatsu flying roller coaster, passengers encounter sudden plunges, huge sweeping spirals, stomach wrenching loops, sharp dives, and high speed banked curves, all deliberately designed to enhance the ultimate sensation of flight.

Los Angeles theme park Six Flags Magic Mountain today announced

that it will celebrate its 35th anniversary next year with the addition of Tatsu, a new "Flying" roller coaster. This new "flying beast" will according to Six Flags, fly into the record books as the world's tallest, fastest, longest flying coaster when it opens in Spring 2006.

This unique "Flying" roller coaster places riders into a flying position before sending them on a never-before-done flight pattern. Tatsu's track will trace its way up, down, over and through Magic Mountain's distinct mountainous terrain. Tatsu will take the riding experience to the next generation, according to Six Flags.

"Six Flags is known world-wide as the industry leader in next generation

"This 'Flying Beast' will...fly into the record books as the world's tallest, fastest, longest flying coaster"

thrills. And, bar none, Six Flags Magic Mountain leads the pack always adding the biggest and the best," said Del Holland, vice president and general manager of Six Flags California. "There's no better way to

commemorate the Park's 35th anniversary than to continue to live up to our reputation - give our guests a stunning one-of-a-kind ride experience only Six Flags can deliver!"

While aboard the wings of Tatsu, riders will fly at speeds in excess of 62 mph through a series of plunges that Six Flags says will create the "butterflies-in-your-stomach" feeling. Tatsu will also feature huge sweeping spirals, stomach wrenching loops, sharp dives and high-speed banked curves all designed to enhance the sensation of flight.

A total of 3,602 feet of red, orange and yellow steel track will be intertwined through the mountainside. Much of it will be barely visible as it will be hidden in the mountain's lush landscape.

Suspended Coaster

Big Bad Wolf

Don't Sleep on this Swingin' Old Coaster

The Big Bad Wolf is the perfect example of why I love Busch Gardens Williamsburg. And it's not even the park's best roller coaster, but it does give you an experience that would be nearly impossible to find anywhere else. A suspended terrain coaster that flies through a Bavarian village then dives to a river. Try finding that in the Coaster Capital (Cedar Point) or in California (state with most coasters). The Wolf is Located in the Rhineland (Germany) section of the European themed park. After dropping off of the short lift hill the train seems to be suddenly be possessed with an intense amount of speed that comes out of nowhere. It still surprises me every time I ride it. Maybe it's common for suspended to seem faster than they are but it makes 45 mph feel a lot faster. As you swing through the village (built just for the ride) you can see lights on in windows and other props that add to the effect of a village in fear of the wolf.

Next the train comes out of the village,

slows to a crawl and then hits the next lift. The second, much longer lift used to have speakers with wolves howling unfortunately I noticed they had been removed on my last visit. Big Bad Wolf feels pretty isolated even though it's right there in the park.

This is thanks to BGW having so many trees and the rolling topography.

Finally, you crest the second hill and dive towards the Rhine River. Right above the river you swoop to the left, take a few more swinging turns and you're back at the station. Overall, the Wolf is still way more inventive and interesting than your average steel coaster. I wish more coasters were themed this well.



Wooden Coaster

Son of Beast

The Wooden Monster

Sequels can be a tricky thing. Take The Exorcist, for example, an unqualified masterpiece. Exorcist II: The Heretic? A megaton bomb so deplorable, even the crater was embarrassed. But then there was Alien, another masterpiece, and its follow-up, Aliens. In that last instance, I'll argue till I'm blue in the face that the second film is more satisfying than the first.

Now, Paramount's Kings Island's Son of Beast (Cincinnati, Ohio) is really just a "sequel" in name only. But let's face it; the park's creative types threw down the gauntlet when they settled on this coaster's moniker. Intentionally or not, they implied that this new machine would strive to equal, or perhaps outdo, the magnificence of its "father," the exalted Beast. Quite a challenge.

The good people at PKI, Roller Coaster

Corp. of America, Premier Rides and the master Werner Stengel himself (the entire team behind Son of Beast), certainly didn't shrink from the task. Son, as announced way back in Spring of 1999, would upstage Pops with not one, but two massive spirals and the first vertical loop on a woodie since the dawn of the 20th Century. Even more, Son of Beast would be the tallest and fastest woodie ever built. They were talking 218 feet tall, another 84 feet higher than The Beast's largest drop and 78 miles per hour, about 13 MPH better than the Beast can muster during normal operation.

This past Spring, it opened. And almost immediately shut down for some minor

retracking. And then reopened with just one train on the circuit. Much enthusiast grumbling ensued. But over time, this beastie boy has settled in, with dependable two-train operation becoming the norm. And more and more people, yours truly included, have finally been able

to sample this outrageous record-smasher. So is it Exorcist II or is it Aliens? Or is it something else?



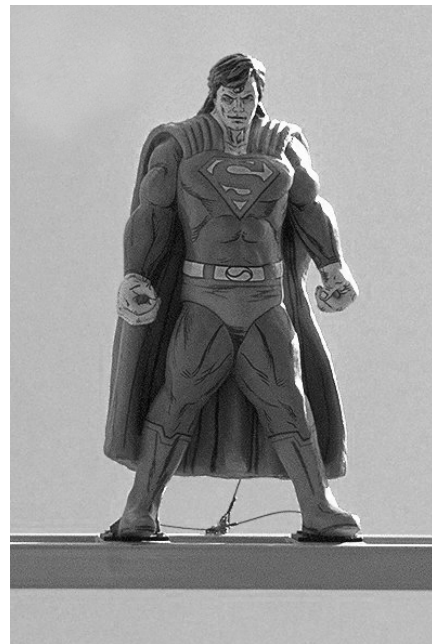
Shuttle Coaster

Superman The Escape

Faster Than A Speeding... well, you know

It's been a long time coming, friends. After more than a year of announcements, rumors and disappointments, the most highly-anticipated thrill ride in history has finally opened. SUPERMAN: THE ESCAPE, the first ride designed to achieve that almost mythic speed of One Hundred Miles Per Hour, can now rightfully claim to be the World's Tallest and Fastest Hiney-Kicker, deposing its Australian sibling, the Tower of Terror. (Dreamworld's T.O.T., a single-track version of Intamin's "Reverse Free-fall," was built while Superman underwent some high-tech tinkering). Yes, the Tower of Terror casts a mighty long shadow, reaching 380 feet into the skies. But the Supe-ster stands heroically upright at 415 feet. This, in simple language, is Bee Eye Gee, friends. There's been some debate among the thrillseeking community about just how to classify this new pleasure device. Call it a rollercoaster, call it a

freefall tower, call it an instrument of torture, it doesn't really matter to me. What matters is that S:TE offers an experience once only available to our finest jet pilots. So, you may be asking, after all this waiting - after all the hype - could any ride possibly live up to such expectations? You'll have to decide for yourself, but after my first trip, all I could whimper was "I gotta do that again!" It totally, utterly, completely Rules. When you approach Magic Mountain from the South on Interstate 5, the first thing you spot beyond the hills surrounding the park is the observation deck of the 38-story Sky Tower. Until recently, that's all you would have seen. Now, further up, poking higher into the heavens, is the



vertical steel structure of S:TE. I don't care how much you may have heard about the size of this thing - once you actually see what 415 feet really means, it takes your breath away. Yes, I'll admit it, I began to get a little frightened. When you enter the park, stop and listen... "Gee, I didn't think there were any naval bases nearby. Where are those F-16's coming from?" You can't imagine the noise this thing makes. Stand under the bend in the far end of the track and wait for a car to pass overhead - it is earsplitting.

Stand Up Coaster

Chang

A True Diamond in the Rough

Chang is an exception in more ways than one. It's a stand-up roller coaster at Six Flags Kentucky Kingdom. That should be two big strikes against it. Stand-up coasters have a history of being uncomfortable and rough. Mantis at Cedar Point and Shockwave at Kings Dominion are two examples. And Six Flags Kentucky Kingdom widely considered at the bottom of the Six Flags barrel. Somehow, Chang not only bucked the odds, but it delivered the best ride I've ever experienced on a stand-up coaster. Like Mantis, Chang is located in a sort of marshy area in Kentucky Kingdom. I saw several laughable, strange, and unique things at SFKK. I got a kick out of the run of the mill restraint buckle latches that had "FOR MARINE USE ONLY" etched into them. What the heck could that mean? Well, if the buckles were good enough for the Armed Forces, I figured they were good enough for me. After the 15 story climb, you're treated to a 144' drop. A large vertical loop follows, then a dive loop, and next there's a transitional turn. After the turn, the train roars up and into an inclined loop. Inclined loops are similar to vertical loops, just bent to one side. A brake run is followed by a two corkscrews. The first corkscrew flips riders over a support building. And the second corkscrew was the highlight of the ride for me. It begins low, hugging the ground. If you sit on the outside edges of the four across cars you feel like you can reach out and touch the ground. After dipping down to the ground you swoop back up and spiral over the queue line. Then the train careens back to the station.



The entire ride is smooth and fun, the way it was meant to be. I have no idea how Chang offers such a different ride than Mantis does when they are pretty similar, but I'm glad I didn't swear off stand-ups after that painful experience at Cedar Point. Chang definitely defies the odds and delivers a great ride. Finally, a stand-up coaster that makes the case for stand-up coasters. Chang is the jewel in the not so shiny crown that is Six Flags Kentucky Kingdom.

Inverted Coaster

Wicked Twister

We're Not In Kansas Any More...

Named Wicked Twister, the 215-foot-tall, 72-mph steel roller coaster will launch riders into a new dimension of thrills and will be Cedar Point's 15th roller coaster, enabling the park to break its own world record for having more coasters than anywhere on Earth.

A "double-twisting" impulse roller coaster, Wicked Twister will use the advanced technology of linear induction motors (LIM) to rocket riders out of the coaster's station - at a maximum speed of 72 mph in 2.5 seconds! - propelling forward and backward and up and down a U-shaped track with spiraling 450-degree corkscrews atop each vertical 215-foot-tall tower. With "twists" on both towers - instead of just one - Wicked Twister will be the first and only coaster of its kind anywhere in the world.

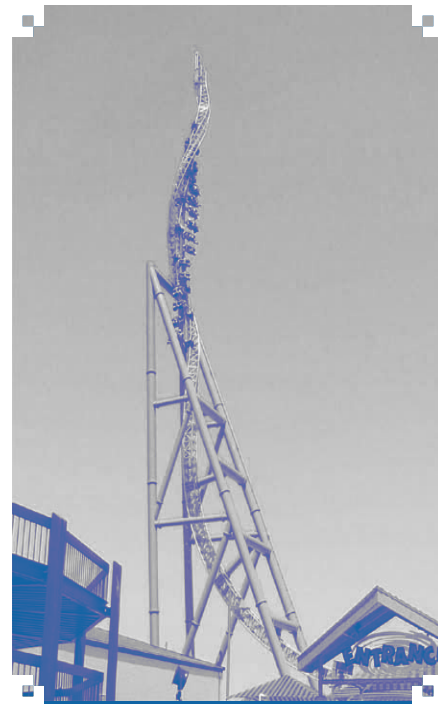
With its train suspended from below its track, Wicked Twister will challenge passengers immediately by launching halfway up the first

90-degree 215-foot-tall tower before briefly pausing, reversing direction and accelerating into the station where it will be thrust nearly all the way up the second 90-degree 215-foot-tall tower.

The coaster will be launched out of the station five times - three forward and two backward - while reaching the apex of each tower on the U-shaped track as it picks up speed through the LIM propulsion system. Riders will face the sky while rotating up the twisting towers and will face the ground while rotating backward in the opposite direction, creating a unique visual illusion of the ground rotating below.

With the addition of Wicked Twister, Cedar Point will be the only amusement park in the world to stake claim to having three roller coasters above 200 feet tall: the 205-foot-tall Magnum XL-200 (1989); the 310-foot-tall Millennium Force (2000) and now the 215-foot-tall Wicked Twister. This twisted scream machine will also be the eighth world-record-breaking ride Cedar Point has introduced since debuting the world-renowned Magnum XL-200 roller coaster in 1989. Plus, Wicked Twister will be the eighth roller coaster the park has added during this same time period.

"Wicked Twister will be the first and only coaster of its kind anywhere in the world"



Water Coaster

Journey to Atlantis

More Fun Than A Barrel of Sea Monkeys

Anheuser Busch, corporate owner of the Sea World marine animal parks since 1989, is a company that Thrillseekers know and love for its dedication to The Cause. The conglomerate's two East Coast theme parks, Busch Gardens Williamsburg and Busch Gardens Tampa, are names most familiar to lovers of huge, glorious scream machines. For quite some time, however, AB seemed content to keep their Sea Worlds relatively sedate enterprises. Sure, the Texas park has some water rides, but there was never much into which we could really sink our teeth. In 1997, that all began to change. Sea World San Antonio added the Bolliger & Mabillard-designed Great White inverted rollercoaster and suddenly there was a Sea World we needed to visit.

Luckily for us, this wasn't to be an isolated incident. Earlier this year, Anheuser Busch "repositioned" the entire chain, renaming them SeaWorld Adventure Parks, complete with a spiffy new logo. It may seem like a small touch, but it's an important one because it means these parks are heading in a bold new direction, one that goes way beyond fish tanks. Of course, when you promise Adventure in a town like Orlando, Florida, you better be ready to deliver the goods. So, the SeaWorld Orlando folks went for the gold - they invested a small fortune in a prototype attraction, the world's first flume ride-rollercoaster hybrid, contained within a towering mythological city. And this past April,

after months of construction, they finally pulled the wraps off their glittering new toy: the spectacular Journey To Atlantis.

"this surprise - packed voyage pegs the Fun Meter like no other flume ride."

Some thrill rides are all about scaring the bejezzus out of you; others aim to overwhelm with mind-blowing special effects; still others just want to make ya laff till your sides ache. Journey to Atlantis may not leave you gasping in terror, nor will its solid fx produce wide-eyed wonder. But this surprise-packed voyage pegs the Fun Meter like no other flume ride I'm able to name. As one sopping boat after another makes its final stop, every single rider disembarks giggling like they'd just won the lottery. I don't care how many people swear by Prozac; if this royally goofy pleasure doesn't elevate your mood, no pill is gonna do the trick.